

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Prior to the entry of this amendment, claims 15-21, 23-28, 35-38, 44-46, 48, 49, 51, and 52 were pending in this application. Claims 15, 17, 25, 28, 35, 36, 44, and 48 have been amended, no claims have been added, and claims 16 and 49 have been canceled herein. Therefore, claims 5-21, 23-28, 35-38, 44-46, 48, 49, 51, and 52 remain pending in the application.

As an initial matter, the Applicants thank the Examiner for performing a careful examination and for indicating the allowable subject matter of claims 16-18, 26, 27, 49, 51, and 52. Amendments have been made herein to incorporate allowable matter into each independent claim, *i.e.*, to rewrite the allowable claims in independent form.

More specifically, claim 15, upon which claims 17-28 depend, has been amended to include the recitations of allowable claim 16 which correspondingly has been canceled herein. Claims 17, 25, and 28 have been amended only to correct formal matters introduced by the amendment to claim 15. Therefore, it is submitted that allowable claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form and that claim 15 and its dependent claims 17-28 are now in allowable form. Similarly, claim 35, upon which claims 36-39 depend, and claim 44, upon which claims 45-47 depend, have been amended to include the recitations of allowable claim 16. Claim 36 has been amended only to correct formal matters introduced by the amendment to claim 35. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 35-39 and 44-47 are now in allowable form. Claim 48, upon which claims 50-52 depend, has been amended to include the recitations of allowable claim 49 which correspondingly has been canceled herein. Therefore, it is submitted that allowable claim 49 has been rewritten in independent form and that claim 48 and its dependent claims 50-52 are now in allowable form.

The applicants respectfully submit that the amendments made herein are made to formal matters only and are made only to rewrite allowable claims in independent form and to

place the pending claims in condition for allowance. Therefore, the applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments and allowance of all remaining claims.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection, Lection in view of Burkett

The Office Action has rejected claims 15, 19-21, 23-25, 28, 35-38, 44-46, and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 6,418,446 of Lection et al. (hereinafter "Lection") in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,671,853 of Burkett et al. (hereinafter "Burkett"), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,671, 853 of Bartoli (hereinafter "Bartoli"). The Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection has been rendered moot by the amendments presented herein and described above. Therefore, the applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 303-571-4000.

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Respectfully submitted,

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